Message Information

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From ESSENEINFO@aol.com

To LisaP Jackson/DC/USEPA/US@EPA

CC

Subject Petition to Lisa P. Jackson from Pesticide Poisoning Victims United

Message Body

Greetings Lisa,

attached is a petition to the EPA asking for three specific actions to be taken. The petition was written by me on behalf of Pesticide Poisoning Victims United, a Division of The Pitchfork Rebellion, a forest dwellers support group movement based in Oregon.

Our group was recently voted as "Best Green Cause" in Oregon and have held the largest rallies on any topic in Oregon over the past several years. In brief, we are a coalition of forest dwellers who have been poisoned by timber industry aerial sprayed herbicides. As the newspaper articles attached as appendixes to the petition document, our issue has become big news in Oregon. As busy as you must be, it is my great hope that you will actually read the attached petition yourself, in its entirety. Four members of my family have been poisoned by aerial spray drift, three of us needed medical intervention. Our movement has become large and strong and is getting major media attention. Please read the attached petition — its attached to this email as a file — and let me know what your initial reaction is. We in the Pacific Northwest have suffered under the Bush EPA; the region 10 chief under Bush was Elin Miller, an ex pesticide CEO. We feel that you represent an actual attempt to return the EPA to an unbiased science-based agency and, as busy as you are, we actually hold the hope that you will

read the attached petition. Thanks, Day Owen EPAPetitionLisa PJacksonPitchforkCall.doc

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To: The Personal Attention of Lisa P. Jackson

From: Pesticide Poisoning Victims United, a Division of The Pitchfork Rebellion, a Forest-Dwellers Support Group Movement based in Rural, Lane County, Oregon.

Our Webpage: pitchforkrebellion.com

E-Mail: greenlion@pitchforkrebellion.com

Mail: C/O Day Owen, Box 160, Greenleaf, OR. 97430

Petition to Lisa P. Jackson, Administrator, US EPA from Pesticide Poisoning Victims United, A Division of The Pitchfork Rebellion

The Topic of this Petition: "A Call for Help Via Three Proposed Actions from Forest-Dwelling Oregonians who Have been Harmed by Timber Industry Aerial-Sprayed Pesticides"

Note: These three proposals are so intimately related as to form one unit and thus one petition

The Three Proposed Actions

PROPOSED ACTION ONE:

The EPA Should Conduct an Unbiased Study to Determine What Would be an Appropriate Aerial Spray Buffer Zone for the Specific Conditions Found along the Highway 36 Corridor in Lane County, Oregon.

MAIN FACTS RELATED TO PROPOSED ACTION ONE

Fact One: There is no existing aerial spray buffer zone in Oregon.

Fact Two: Members of Pesticide Poisoning Victims United have been harmed by exposure to pesticide drift from timber industry aerial spray near our homes, a fact that has led to large public protest rallies in Lane County, Oregon, and our effort to see established an aerial spray buffer zone. The protest rallies, led by rural forest-dwellers, have been the largest protest rallies on any topic in Oregon for the past several years, and have featured the testimony of persons poisoned by the aerial sprays, including children, as well as mock trials of pesticide CEO's and government agencies that are perceived to be under their thumbs. [News articles about these rallies and our forest-dwellers movement are included in the appendix section. We were recently voted 'Best Green Cause' by the readers of Eugene Weekly. We mention that here simply because it is important for people in Washington DC to understand that this issue has become BIG news in Oregon and must be dealt with NOW.]

<u>Fact Three:</u> Current EPA data on spray drift is largely based on unreliable data provided by the pesticide industry via the Spray Drift Task Force, a group of 42 companies.

<u>Fact Four:</u> Not only is the drift data relied upon by the EPA unreliable due to its source – the very people who profit from pesticides – but it is too generic to pertain to the specific conditions found along the Highway 36 corridor of Lane County, Oregon.

Fact Five: The unique conditions along the Highway 36 corridor are as follows:

a) A heavily logged coastal mountain range wherein the mountain tops and high slopes are typically owned by private timber companies and operated as industrial tree farms featuring clearcuts and aerial sprayed pesticides while the lower slopes and valleys are owned by residents who reside in homes impacted by the sprays;

b) The sprays are thus typically done at a higher elevation than the nearby homes,

sometimes with homes virtually directly beneath sprays;

c) The coastal mountain range along the Highway 36 corridor is a temperate rain forest and is thus extremely wet; this wetness results in a multitude of springs – water seeping out of the soil to run downhill in streams to empty into Salmon-bearing Lake Creek – as well as almost daily extreme fog. The fog seems to come right out of the mountain itself, hovers near ground level for much of the day, and is in almost constant movement from one 'property' to the next, respecting no borders and carrying pesticide drift due to the fact that timber industry helicopters routinely spray over these banks of moving fog clouds [the Oregon Department of Oregon, which monitors timber industry sprays, when asked by us whether or not spraying directly above wet, moving fog is a violation of the label law that prohibits applying pesticides on water, replied that they do not know];
d) The specific conditions include factors that result in unusual wind patterns, often changing repeatedly within a few minute time-span, a situation that results in the inability of helicopter pilots to accurately predict wind patterns prior to beginning a given spray operation.

Fact Six: Upon our request, neither government nor industry has been able to point to drift studies that have been done in conditions that: a) mimic our Highway 36 corridor bioregion conditions described above, and b) include analysis of the movement of pesticides – including their inert ingredients and when used in 'cocktails' – sprayed on these types of fog banks and low moist clouds when sprayed almost directly above homes in a region of unpredictable, repeatedly-shifting wind patterns.

Fact Seven: Due to the above stated facts, determining the appropriate amount of protection that should be given residents of the Highway 36 corridor – and similar bioregions – in regard to the establishment of a specific distance of aerial spray buffer zone is problematic in that insufficient, unreliable, and non-site-specific scientific data is currently all that is available to the EPA, a fact that can be rectified only if the EPA itself conducts an unbiased study of the specifics listed above, as is called for by this PROPOSED ACTION ONE. [By 'unbiased' and 'conducted by the EPA itself' we mean that every aspect of the study should be under the auspices of EPA, not private industry, including the contracting of the helicopters used in the study, which should be the same type helicopters and same type spray nozzles currently commonly employed in this bioregion. We suggest that the pesticide companies foot the bill of these studies and that private contractors unaffiliated with the pesticide industry be hired to do the physical testing, overseen by EPA.]

NOTE: For additional material in support of Proposed Action One see the attached Appendix One: Cover Story of Eugene Weekly on The Pitchfork Rebellion. That article describes the 2005 beginnings of the forest-dweller support group movement called The Pitchfork Rebellion that, in 2009, was voted Best Green Cause. The article gives essential background information to Proposed Action One. Please read it in its entirety.

PROPOSED ACTION TWO:

Until The Study Described In The Above Proposed Action One is Completed and an Appropriate Pesticide Aerial-Spray Buffer Zone for the Highway 36 Corridor has Been Determined and Lawfully Established, the EPA Will Mandate an Aerial Spray Buffer Zone Around Properties with Homes or Schools of One Mile,

First Along the Highway 36 Corridor and Subsequently in Other Regions that are Found to Have Similar Risks According to a Risk Model that will be Created by the EPA

MAIN FACTS RELATED TO PROPOSED ACTION TWO

<u>Fact One:</u> In support of this Proposed Action Two, *Pesticide Poisoning Victims United*, a Division of *The Pitchfork Rebellion*, will provide evidence that our bioregion, the above described heavily-logged, extremely wet, Highway 36 Corridor located in Lane County, Oregon, is a known trouble-spot in regard to aerial-sprayed pesticide exposures and thus deserves immediate attention and protection. That evidence will include:

- Testimony of individuals who have been poisoned by timber industry aerial sprayed pesticides;
- Evidence from various Oregon government agency meetings that demonstrate a sort of 'hot spot' of complaints related to aerial-sprayed pesticides in the Highway 36 Corridor.

Fact Two: It is proverbial common-sense and scientific truth that 'one shoe does not fit every foot'. It is equally true that one aerial-spray buffer zone does not appropriately fit the need of every diverse bio-region and sub-region of Oregon. A region like the Highway 36 Corridor where constantly-changing wind patterns, almost daily low flying fog moving rapidly a few feet above the ground, rain-forest wet conditions, and, significantly, residential homes dotted throughout industrial managed 'tree-farm' forests that feature clear-cuts and aerial sprays, with the homes at lower elevations than the nearby sprays, warrants a different, more extreme buffer zone, than most other regions or sub-regions. Thus, the EPA, if it is to fulfill its obligation to protect the public from over-exposure to pesticides, must develop regional and subregional analysis for risk management that includes models for regions like the Highway 36 Corridor described in this petition. Such a model should include all of the factors listed above, and any others that are pertinent. Such a model might label our described region as 'Extremely High Risk' and legally mandate that regions receiving that designation have a more extreme aerial-spray buffer zone, or, in some cases, permanently ban aerial applications in certain conditions. A region where the land is flat, wind patterns more stable, conditions not so wet, might receive another label such as 'Moderate Risk for Aerial Spray' or 'Low Risk' etc. Currently, there is no aerial spray buffer zone at all in Oregon; we not only want one, we want a scientifically-based multi-pronged model that recognizes the very real differences in risk according to diverse conditions from one region or sub-region to the next. In our view, anything less is criminal negligence.

Fact Three: As documented in the attached Appendix Two: Testimonials of Highway 36 Corridor Residents who Have been Poisoned by Aerial Sprays More than a Quarter Mile Away, a one mile buffer zone is prudent in this and similar high risk zones. Read that appendix!

PROPOSED ACTION THREE:

A Call to Investigate the Significance of the Influence of
Big Business on the US EPA
over the History of the US EPA
Prior to the Beginning of the Obama Administration with
A Special Look at How that Influence has Impacted the Laws and Policies that
Have Resulted in Current Aerial Spray Practices Along the Highway 36 Corridor
in Lane County, Oregon

MAIN FACTS RELATED TO PROPOSED ACTION THREE

<u>Fact One:</u> We, the petitioners, in our effort to see an unbiased, science-based aerial spray buffer zone established in the State of Oregon, have interacted with various government agencies and departments for about seven years; in that time, we have become convinced that Big Business – especially 'Big Agriculture' – has enjoyed undue influence over every State and Federal government agency and department that we have examined, including the Oregon Department of Forestry, the Oregon Department of Agriculture, The U.S. Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Department of the Interior (and its dozens of sub-units including the Bureau of Land Management), and the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Important Note: After our forest-dwellers support group movement, The Pitchfork Rebellion. held community meetings to gather testimonials from people who had been harmed by aerial sprayed pesticides, we then contacted various government agencies - including the EPA - with one simple request: We asked each of a dozen agencies to please come interview the people in our community who claim to have been harmed by aerial sprays. At this point, we were naïve; we did not yet know that these agencies were heavily influenced by Big Agriculture. However, when not one agency would even interview the people who claim to have been poisoned including families who had multiple children rushed to the hospital after sprays - we smelled something 'fishy'. And so we launched a three-year investigation called, The Pitchfork Inquiry on the Influence of Big Business on State and Federal Government Agencies. The results of that investigation were shocking and received extensive media coverage in Oregon. In regard to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, we discovered that the chief administrator at that time for our Region Ten, Elin Miller, was a former pesticide company CEO (Arvsta Life Sciences) she also formerly was an executive of Dow Agro – and that she was more interested in protecting the profits of Big Pesticide than protecting the environment of the Pacific Northwest. Though our movement became the largest forest-dweller movement of any kind in the State of Oregon, and though we tried for several years to get a meeting, phone conversation, or at least an exchange of letters with Elin Miller, we never succeeded in talking to anyone but her public relations officers. As we further investigated the EPA, we discovered that this was not an isolated event; rather, Big Business in general and Big Agriculture in particular, had, since the inception of the EPA during the Nixon administration, exercised what is clearly UNDUE INFLUENCE over every aspect of the EPA, INCLUDING THE CRITICAL 'SCIENCE' ON WHICH POLICIES AND LAWS HAVE BEEN BASED.

Fact Two: We believe that we have gathered indisputable evidence to support the above 'Fact One' and the assertions made in the above 'Important Note', but we do not ask that the EPA simply acknowledge or deny our assertions of UNDUE INFLUENCE; rather, we request that our assertion be investigated by an unbiased team appointed by administrator Lisa P. Jackson, and that the motive of the investigation be honest self-assessment by an agency that is currently

in better hands than has previously been the case; the opportunity for authentic reform may not come again.

Fact Three: This 'Proposed Action Three' is not unrelated to the first two proposed actions of this petition to Lisa P. Jackson. In truth, having seen what we have seen, the petitioners believe that the chances of our receiving justice at the hands of the EPA would increase if an unbiased study commissioned by the EPA were to find that the EPA had, throughout its history, been unduly influenced by Big Business, including the insertion of certain structural flaws at its inception designed to handcuff the agency - as was boldly and accurately described by Ms. Jackson before a congressional committee in the Fall of 2009 - and a special look at how that history of undue influence has resulted in the current aerial spray practices legally permitted in the home district of we petitioners. We believe that the fact of undue influence by Big Agriculture is entirely related to the fact that the EPA - the agency in charge of regulating pesticide use - permits our community to be attacked by the air by helicopters spraying poison WITH ABSOLUTELY ZERO LEGAL BUFFER ZONE, sending our children to the hospital. Only in the fresh air and bright light of honest self-assessment of its own past history can the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency move on and upward to be what American's want it to be: the protector of our environment rather than the protector of the profit of the polluters. It is no mere coincidence that The Simpson's Movie portrayed the EPA as the tool of Big Business; rather, that has become the public perception for very valid reasons, as will be shown by an unbiased study such as the one we are calling for in our 'Proposed Action Three'.

Important Note: The reason that our 'Proposed Action Three' specifies that the unbiased historical study of the influence of Big Business on the EPA should cover the years from its inception up to the inauguration of President Obama – thus not including the Obama era – is not because we desire to spare the Obama administration from this scrutiny. Rather, the reason is practical: it is simply too soon to attempt an analysis of this administration's actions. We do, however, believe that President Obama has clearly made initial appointments that signal an intent to go in the direction of a science-based EPA that is a public servant rather than a corporate servant. His appointment of Lisa P. Jackson, in light of her subsequent words and actions, is viewed by us as a positive sign, but it is still too early to make definitive analysis of the Obama EPA such as is called for in our 'Proposed Action Three'.

Fact Four: We, the petitioners, wish to make clear that when we refer to the 'undue influence' of Big Business over government agencies such as EPA, we are not asserting that Big Business should not have a seat at the 'Table of Stakeholders'; rather, we are asserting that they have successfully captured more influence than is healthy for 'the environment' that the EPA is called to 'protect', including the Highway 36 Corridor where we, the petitioners, are being assaulted by poison from the sky as though we were enemy combatants, a degree of unhealthy influence that we forthrightly term UNDUE. When a revolving door between industry and the EPA results in pesticide CEO's serving as key administrators of the EPA – who then leave government and join the Board of Directors of the Monsanto Corporation and other pesticide makers – and when the 'science' related to aerial spray drift relied upon by the EPA to make 'science-based' law comes exclusively from *The Spray Drift Task Force* – 42 pesticide companies – situations like that which exists along the Highway 36 Corridor where we are routinely subject to aerial chemical warfare will remain legal.

Note: In support of Proposed Action Three please see Appendixes Three and Four.

Appendix One to Petition to EPA

Article About Petitioners in Eugene Weekly



News Views

Letters

Calendar

Film

Music Culture

Classifieds

Personals

Archive

Current Issue

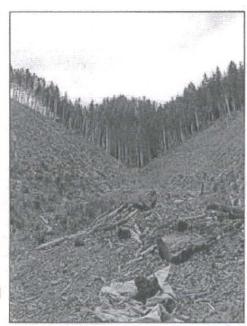
The Pitchfork Rebellion

Country folk wage an uphill battle against herbicides sprayed on private forestland. STORY AND PHOTOS BY KERA ABRAHAM

Drive west along Oregon's Highway 36, past Triangle Lake into the Blachly-Greenleaf-Deadwood area, and you'll find yourself in coastal mountain country. Cows amble on green pastures; barns set down next to wooden houses; farmers and loggers pick fights in roadside bars.

It should be pretty. But the clear-cut hills that rise steeply from the highway are an eyesore, like ill-placed hair plugs on the balding scalp of a beautiful man. Families own the lowlands, but city-based timber companies hold deeds to most of the hilltops. They manage them for short-term profit, clear cutting swaths of forest on 15-year rotations, then dousing the naked slopes with herbicides to regenerate neat rows of Douglas fir. You'll likely pass more logging trucks than cars on the highway. The sound of helicopters is as regular as birdsong.

It's been this way for decades. As more than a few loggers'll tell ya, it's a living.



A clearcut hill off Highway 36

But something snapped in Blachly recently, and it wasn't just a tree under the weight of a mudslide. You could see it on the side of the highway on Feb. 11, at the base of a particularly homely clearcut. About 50 folks in jeans and baseball hats held hand-printed cardboard signs reading "No Spray" and "Health is Wealth." They took turns at a staticky microphone, lambasting big timber and pesticide companies for poisoning them for profit, politicians for failing to pass substantive laws to protect their farms and families, and media for not noticing. Their mantra: "We're mad as hell, and we're not gonna take it anymore."

This, they announced, was the beginning of something big. An uphill battle, but one absolutely

necessary to protect their land and their families.

This was the launch of the Pitchfork Rebellion.

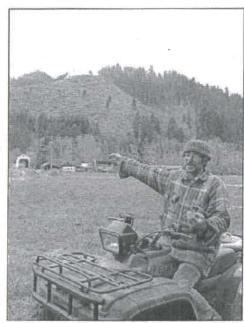
Rebels with a cause

If Lane County's major timber companies — Weyerhaeuser, Roseburg, Rosboro, Swanson — are Goliath, then it's not hard to imagine David Owen's role. Two years ago, he left his natural food store in Veneta to move to Blachly with his wife Neila and her two school-aged children. They raised up a home and a small organic farm, complete with chickens and goats, and he became the minister of a country church. Wearing his trademark denim overalls, with a long white beard and small sharp blue eyes, he resembles a farmer Santa.

Last fall, Owen began hosting monthly meetings for neighbors concerned about the herbicide operations. He invited expert guests to lecture on the science of herbicides, the laws governing their use and citizens' tools for reform.

Then the stories started percolating in, like groundwater into a mountain creek. The neighbors noted that one local man breaks out in sores every time there's a nearby spray. A young father told how he had bad stomach pains, and his dog lost half of its fur, after a timber company doused the hill behind his house. A mother noted that two Triangle Lake High graduates died of testicular cancer in their 20s and 30s. Several locals said they feel depressed, aggressive or moody during the spraying season. Organic farmers noticed changes in their crops and wondered if they were being contaminated by chemical drift.

Cheryl Smith, a goat rancher, said her animals had a "freakish year" of miscarriages and birth defects. Pam Benson, a self-described recluse, said she once inhaled a lungful of herbicide out the gar windows her threat began to blood, one of her lungs.



Fred Mentzer

out the car window; her throat began to bleed, one of her lungs filled up with fluid, and she was incapacitated for several weeks.

Nancy Weiler, the owner of a country diner off Highway 36, said she noticed customers with the same medley of symptoms — sore throat, dry mouth, itchy eyes — around spraying time. "I'm selling food here and they spray right behind me," she said. "You can't tell me it's not dropping down right onto us."

Governing Goliath

It's hard for the state of Oregon to say which ailments of the body or mind are caused by herbicide exposure. But one thing's for sure: Timber companies spray the bejeezus out of West Lane County. In just one section, where Highway 36 meets Nelson Mountain Road in Blachly, timber companies sprayed more than 1,000 acres of forestland with few dozen herbicides between January 2005 and March 2006.

So when Blachly folks come down with sore throats and stomachaches, there's no easy way to pinpoint what exactly caused it. They can't likely look to state forester Paul Clements, the West Lane Oregon Department of Forestry's unlucky spokesman, for quick answers. Clements, who talks with a slight drawl and wears jeans to work at the ODF's Veneta office, manages to come across as blunt while talking circles around direct questions.

When people call the West Lane ODF to ask herbicide-related questions — What're they spraying above my land right now? Will it get into my creek? Is it unhealthy? — Clements navigates them through a maze of rules, regulations and agencies that govern private forestry practices in Oregon.



Lynn Bowers

The 1971 Oregon Forest Practices Act (FPA) was the nation's first law regulating private forest operations. But 35 years after its creation, Oregon's FPA has fallen behind neighboring states' to become the weakest forestry law in the Pacific Northwest. It allows landowners to clearcut forested patches up to 120 acres, provided they leave two trees standing per acre, and spray herbicides to within 10 feet of streams if applied from the ground, or 60 feet if applied by helicopter. They can log steep slopes bare, but must spare 100-foot buffers next to streams and a "visual corridor" of trees next to scenic highways.

The FPA assumes that when timber operators follow these rules, they'll be in compliance with federal laws such as the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act. The FPA also charges the ODF with ensuring that forest operators follow rules from other state agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture, the Department of Environmental Quality and the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Timber companies reserve the right to spray any EPA-approved herbicide in whatever quantity and frequency they choose, so long as they follow the pesticide's label. And if they submit a written plan, they can ask state foresters to waive any of those pesky Forest Practices Act restrictions.

Spokesmen from Weyerhaeuser and Rosboro (Roseburg wouldn't return our calls) insist that their forest operators follow the FPA to a tee, and even take additional voluntary precautions to protect people and the environment.

"We use procedures that are so exact," said Weyerhaeuser spokesman Mike Moskovitz. "It's all computerized in terms of measuring the wind, distance, everything."

"We do use approved chemicals and herbicides, so hopefully the scientists and the people who are smarter than me have determined that they are not a problem," said Rosboro Lumber spokesman Jim Enright.

Judging by the ODF's enforcement records, West Lane forest operators must be just about perfect. Or something. Thousands of forestry operations occur in West Lane County every year, but the Veneta ODF office has issued exactly 30 penalties — totaling \$13,362 — between January 2002 and March 2006. Only four of the penalties were assessed to big timber companies. Weyerhaeuser got the highest fine: \$2,225.

Safe as they wanna be

Timber reps and industry lobbyists insist that when forestry herbicides are used correctly, there's no

cause for alarm. But they can't prove that the 'cides are safe any better than Blachly-area farmers can prove that they're dangerous. The state's data has more holes than the cheese in Swiss Home.

The state DEQ has 30 years of water quality data on Lake Creek, a protected chinook salmon run and the domestic water source for hundreds of Highway 36-area residents. But the DEQ has never specifically tested the creek for herbicides, leaving that task to the ODF.

The ODF, for its part, has published a few studies that skirt the question of whether forestry herbicides are degrading the state's water sources. An April 2002 ODF report concluded that forest operators complied with 96 percent of the FPA rules and 98 percent of the state's chemical application rules. But the study's authors did no chemical testing of the water.



Pam Benson

A 2000 ODF study analyzed water samples from 26 "volunteered" forestry herbicide and fungicide application sites, none of them in Lane County. The study reported that, on the whole, water contamination was minimal. But hexazinone and 2,4-D — two of the most toxic forestry herbicides — were found at trace levels in several of the samples. "Chemical monitoring is a low priority for the Forest Practices Section," the study concluded. "[N]o changes are recommended to the forest practice laws."

And that seems to be that. The ODF hasn't studied the effects of herbicides on timberland communities since. "If we had more resources, we would do more monitoring and collect more data," said ODF policy analyst Brad Knotts. "We try to do what we can with the resources we have."

Clements said he takes about 12 "calls of concern" about herbicides per month. "I don't think they pose any risk to the public health beyond what is known of their effectiveness," he said. "Of course, there are people who aren't satisfied with the mechanisms that are available. Some people don't like handguns either."

Poison is as poison does

It might be easy to pass the Pitchfork Rebels off as hysterical country folk. But many of the symptoms that they describe match up with existing information on herbicide poisoning.

David Owen quickly made allies with Lynn Bowers, an activist who launched a campaign against herbicide spraying on south Eugene timberlands around 2003. Her group, Forestland Dwellers, interviewed dozens of herbicide exposure victims and compiled a list of the recurring symptoms, ranging from the annoying (coughs, rashes, headaches) to the disturbing (aggression, abnormal menstruation, hair loss) to the critical (infertility, attention deficit disorder, Parkinson's disease, a range of cancers).

The herbicides sprayed over the Blachly area span a wide arsenal of weed-killers, including hexazinone, glyphosate, sulfometuron methyl, triclopyr, imazapyr, atrazine and 2,4-D. Although the EPA allows these chemicals to remain on the market, their persistence, toxicity and health effects are still largely unknown.

According to the Pesticide Action Network's online database (www.pesticideinfo.org), several of these forestry herbicides are particularly toxic. Hexazinone is a persistent water contaminant; atrazine is a suspected endocrine disrupter and carcinogen; both are toxic to aquatic organisms. 2,4-D, made infamous as one of the two active ingredients in Agent Orange, is a possible carcinogen and suspected endocrine disrupter that has been linked with a spectrum of sinister health effects.



Richard Mentzer

The ODF points to studies indicating that herbicide use on private forests has practically no impact on water quality, but the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides cites studies showing the opposite. In 1996, U.S. Forest Service tests on streams and groundwater in the Stanislaus National Forest found that hexazinone can persist in water sources for up to a year after sprayings. In 2000, lab tests sponsored by the Alsea Citizens' Monitoring Committee detected atrazine and hexazinone from forestry operations in streams at levels dangerous to aquatic organisms.

Neither side is convinced by the other's data. But for Blachly's Nancy Weiler, the answer is right there on the herbicide label. "What happened to common sense?" she asked. "What about the fact that anything that says '-cide' means 'kill'?"

Symptoms? What symptoms?

In the absence of definitive soil and water data, the Pitchfork Rebels turn to health records. Do clusters of common symptoms appear after herbicide operations?

Enter Oregon's Pesticide Analytical Response Center (PARC), established by executive order in 1978 to assemble health data related to pesticide exposure. State law requires physicians to report cases in which they believe a patient was affected by pesticide exposure to the Department of Health, which passes the info along to PARC.

Department of Health Services epidemiologist Michael Heumann, who sits on the PARC board, says that pesticide poisoning cases are probably under-reported. Only a fraction of people who are exposed to herbicides see a doctor; only a fraction of those doctors are able to recognize symptoms of pesticide poisoning; and only a fraction of them report those cases to the state. "Either the patient doesn't know it or the doctor doesn't recognize it," Heumann said. "The fact is that pesticide cases are seen so infrequently by doctors that it's easy for them to miss it."

PeaceHealth Medical Director Gary Young said his physicians report all pesticide-exposure cases to the state. But PeaceHealth doctors didn't file David Owen a PARC report after Jim Freire, a Greenleaf man who believed he'd been



poisoned by herbicides, was checked in for cardiac arrest (see Chemical Refugees at end of article).

McKenzie-Willamette physician Ben Bronciel said that herbicide exposure cases are often too fuzzy to pin. "We don't have a protocol to deal with it," he said. "People will come in with respiratory complaints, and that's managed symptomatically. There's no individual test that can be done to

detect if someone's been exposed to herbicides."

PARC has also been hobbled by internal meltdown. The Legislature stripped the agency of its funding in 2003 and restored it again in August 2005. PARC director Chris Kirby admitted that without the funding, PARC has a limited ability to assess the health impacts of pesticides.

"Documentation is needed, and without that, it's hard to make a reasonable conclusion," Kirby said.
"At the same time, PARC is not funded to go out and do research. Perhaps folks would see that as a disconnect. But if there isn't data, then where are we?"

The Blachly town doctor, Richard Mentzer, hasn't reported any cases to PARC. "I really can't say I've seen disease that I can directly trace to herbicides, but over the years I've had a lot of people complaining that they get sick from it," he said. "I probably wouldn't know herbicide poisoning if I saw it. The only way for me to find out would be to drink a glass of it."

But that doesn't mean he's comfortable with the spraying. "I feel strongly that we can't keep pouring poisons on the earth and have a good outcome," Mentzer said.

So he and his brother Fred harvest and mill their own timber from 200 acres of forest that they cut selectively, without herbicides. The Mentzer brothers are certified for sustainable forestry and have been managing their forest for 30 years — longer, Fred noted, than Goracke-Templeton Timber Company has owned the bald hump across the highway.



Nancy Weiler, Cheryl Smith, Patrice Johnson and Neila Owen.

Alternatives

On a drizzly March afternoon, five Pitchfork Rebels sat around a table at Nancy Weiler's diner, hashing out strategies for fighting the herbicide operations. A cardboard Betty Boop waitress stood beside them, waiting to take their order.

The Pitchfork Rebels made four demands. They want the ODF to review forestry herbicides for their safety and necessity, and investigate safer alternatives. They ask that elected officials *not* beholden to the timber industry hold public hearings on forestry practices. They demand an immediate halt to herbicide use within one mile of schools. And they call for the replacement of clearcutting with sustainable, selective logging practices.

It's an uphill battle. By and large, Owen explained, his neighbors don't trust the ODF any more than they trust Weyerhaeuser. They aren't inclined to subscribe for spraying notifications or submit written comments to the ODF, much less report their medical concerns to the state. "We don't even know who we're supposed to call to complain," Owen said. "The feeling is that these ODF guys are in the pocket of the timber industry."

Owen said that funny things happen to folks who speak up against the timber industry: Water pipes get smashed, houses get torched, choppers spray homes directly, tax appraisers come knocking. The fear of retaliation is as real as the conviction that the sprayings make people sick. "Whether it's true or not, people believe it," Owen said.

But as the Forestland Dwellers of south Eugene have shown, it helps to be loud. In 2003, the Dwellers launched a campaign to get more neighbors to sign up with the ODF for spray notifications.

They wrote letters to the editor and contacted their elected representatives. In March 2004, the Dwellers negotiated an agreement with Rosboro Lumber; the company committed to harvesting a nearby property without aerial herbicide applications. Rosboro then sold the property to local environmentalist Tom Lininger, who replanted it and now uses it as a demonstration site for herbicide-free forestry. "They know that we're watching 'em," Bowers said.

"They understood that we were the private landowners, and they weren't there to kick us out or call us bad guys," company spokesman Jim Enright said. "Once you come to the table with those understandings, you're more likely to work things out. And we did."

Bowers and the Oregon Toxics Alliance are now working with state Rep. Paul Holvey on several bills that would tighten restrictions on timber industries. "There have been a lot of complaints about spraying, and we're really worried about the effects this is having in our watersheds," Holvey said. "These bills would make us accountable for what kinds of herbicides we are spraying so we can monitor what's getting into our water."



Paul Clements

Holvey says that public complaints and medical cases filed with the ODF, DEQ and PARC will help him build a case for legislative change. "I'm hoping to get a good arsenal of data to identify that there is a problem in our rivers, groundwater and rural areas," he said. "I need to hear these things and move forward."

Gary Kutcher, director of the Sustainable Forestry Network, isn't waiting for legislative reform. He wants to take the issue straight to the people of Oregon. He is proposing a ballot initiative that would require private timber companies to leave two-thirds of the trees on any given acre standing. Clearcutting and herbicide use would be banned.

It may be a long shot — Kutcher's last ballot initiative, in 1998, only got 20 percent of the vote after the timber industry outspent his campaign 100-to-1 — but he's undaunted. "Laws are meant to be changed," he said. Kutcher is also challenging Faye Stewart's seat on the Lane County Commission.

Meanwhile, off Highway 36 in Blachly, Fred and Richard Mentzer are harvesting and milling selectively cut, herbicide-free wood from their own timberlands. This is, after all, what the Pitchfork Rebels say they want: not an end to logging, but sustainable forestry that creates jobs and keeps wealth local while protecting the community's air, soil and water.

That gave Neila Owen, brainstorming with the Rebels at Eat at Joe's, an idea. "I feel a boycott of some sort is in order," she said. "We don't need to support the companies that poison us. Let's buy our wood from the Mentzers."

Chemical Refugees

Jim and Tammy Freire and their two youngest children lived for 10 years in a Greenleaf home off Highway 36. Tammy did the record-keeping for the town doctor and ran an herbal nursery; Jim installed home theater systems and grew cacti in a greenhouse. The Freires custom-designed their house with the notion that they would grow old there.

In 1999, after an electric company sprayed a utility pole in his yard, Jim went into cardiac arrest. He was rushed unconscious to PeaceHealth, his chest cracked open and an angiogram performed on his heart. He was diagnosed with arteritis (inflammation of the arteries) and had a triple bypass. He was 40 years old and uninsured. The family filed bankruptcy.

Less than a year later, Jim's oldest son Ryan, then 21 and in college at the UO, came home for a four-day visit. A helicopter flew overhead, just barely turning off its sprayers before swooping over the house. "The herbicides hit everything in our yard, including us," Tammy said. When Ryan returned to Eugene, he felt ill. Within an hour he was in the hospital in cardiac arrest.



Jim Freire

"I broke Einstein's law getting to town," Jim said. "I looked at my son and he was the color of the walls — pale white with a blue tinge. He flatlined right in front of me and they had to paddle him back." Ryan recovered and was diagnosed with arteritis, like his dad.

Jim called the Oregon Department of Forestry to complain about the incident. Officers from the ODF and the Oregon Department of Agriculture took a few plant samples, found them free of herbicides and closed the case.

But the Freires' health problems continued during subsequent sprays. Jim realized that the herbicides from operations on the hills above them were sifting eastward, right into the little dell where they lived. Tammy kept getting a skin rash and irregular periods, and developed upper respiratory problems. Their daughter got stomach cramps and rashes. Their yard plants burned up. Their pet dove Hootie went from male to female. "If it can do that to the bird, what can it do to my kids?" Tammy asked. "I'd like to be a grandma someday!"

In early 2000, after a spray, Jim and Tammy's 8-year-old son started having chest pains. He grasped at his left arm and gasped for breath. He went into cardiac arrest and was rushed to Sacred Heart, where he was given an anti-inflammatory and recovered.

In March of this year, the Freires reluctantly pulled up their Greenleaf roots and moved to Springfield. "I knew that if I stayed out here much longer, I would get my wish — I'd be buried out here," Jim said. "But much sooner than I care to be."

When he spoke about leaving the home and the land where he'd hoped to retire, Jim choked up. "I'm really pissed that we have to leave," he said, sitting on the last piece of furniture in his Greenleaf home, hands gripping his knees. "But unless they make this a less toxic environment, we can't live here." — Kera Abraham

NOTE: the above article is from 2006, the early stages of The Pitchfork Rebellion Forest Dwellers movement. The legislative efforts described in the article were all squashed by an industry front group called Oregonians For Food and Shelter, which consists of dozens of timber and pesticide corporations including Monsanto, DuPont, and Dow Agro. They squashed the bills in the agriculture committee, which they

completely control. The bills never got out of that committee and never will.

Appendix Two

Testimonials of Highway 36 Corridor Residents who Have been Poisoned by Aerial Sprays More than a Quarter Mile Away

(This article is in support of Proposed Action Three's proposed aerial spray buffer zone of one mile)

Until and unless unbiased testing as called for in this petition's Proposed Action One determines a scientifically based distance for an aerial spray buffer zone, our proposed buffer zone of one mile is prudent and reasonable based on the empirical evidence that many Highway 36 Corridor residents have been gravely sickened by aerial sprays done between a quarter mile and a half mile of their homes. Again, as argued in the text of our Proposed Action Two, the reason that residents of our coastal mountain range are impacted at such long distances is the set of circumstances that exist in this bioregion, including daily wet fog, constantly changing wind patterns, and, most significantly, the fact that <u>our homes are located in the valleys directly beneath the mountain tops and slopes being sprayed.</u>

Here follows several testimonials; we can easily produce more. Also, for sake of space, we provide here brief excerpts from what are much longer testimonials. The longer versions are available upon request.

Testimony of Neila Crocker-Owen

On October 12, 2007, I was milking goats on my 35 acre organic farm.

A helicopter began spraying pesticide on the clearcut mountain across the street from my property. I was later told by the Oregon Department of Forestry that the distance was about a quarter mile from my home. Because the helicopter seemed far enough away that I did not think I would get exposed, and, because I really can't quit milking the goats once I have started, I continued working. The spray went on for three hours while I worked outdoors with my farm animals.

Suddenly I became very ill. I was nauseas and had pain in my chest. My muscles became so weak that I could not lift the milk pale the way I normally can. I went and told my husband what was happening. By that time he was also very sick. He had been outside as well. We went to the doctor. My husband could barely drive but fortunately

the doctor's office is only a few miles from our house. My husband's life signs were off the charts and he was having dry heaves. Later he and I both vomited.

This exposure caused my menstrual cycle to be radically altered from its normal, which also happened to my daughters after their exposures, and which also happened to neighbor women. Whatever is in the pesticide affects all of us local women's menstrual cycles when we get exposed. We have all noticed that.

My muscles had extreme pain for some days and then that pain moved deeper into my joints. For months I was in severe pain, and it took a year for most the pain to leave.

Testimony of David 'Day' Owen

When my wife Neila was milking the goats and hollered to me that the helicopter flying a quarter mile from our home (higher elevation than our home) was spraying pesticide, I got my video camera and, standing on my own property, began to film. I didn't think the helicopter was close enough for me to get exposed. But less than a half hour into my filming I noticed I could taste a nasty chemical taste in my mouth. Then my whole face felt like it was on fire, and also the top of my head. I began to feel very sick to my stomach. I wanted to throw up but was just getting dry heaves.

We went to the doctor's office and I had to lay on the ground in the waiting room. My life signs were way off the chart. We don't have health insurance and the doctor told us that there was nothing that could be done by going to the hospital anyway. So we went home and laid in bed sick for a couple days. I had red streaks on my arms and legs which we video taped. (video available on request). I developed terrible feaver and the dry heaves became actual vomit. The burning sensation on my skin went away but on top of my head where it had burned I developed some sort of polyps (weird pimple-like things) that have not gone away. For several days I had uncontrollable extremely painful muscle cramps in my legs; those turned into muscle spasms.

On the first day of our exposure we called PARC, the task force of the Oregon Department of Agriculture that Oregonians are told to call to report pesticide exposures. I begged them to come out and test our land for traces of pesticide, and to test our clothes which I had placed in a plastic bag in the freezer. I also saved a urine sample and begged them to test that. They refused to come to our property. I later found out that they are controlled by the same companies that make the pesticides. When I compared my experience with that of many neighbors, they all had similar experiences with PARC (Pesticide Analytical Response Center).

Testimony of Maya Gee

In 2008 I was exposed to pesticide from a clearcut that is around a half mile from our 55 acre property. Although it sounds like that is a far distance, much of that distance is up: the clearcut is at a much higher elevation, and, what goes up must come down.

I was sick to my stomach and terribly ill. I had horrible diarrhea. My menstrual cycle was thrown way off, which is a symptom that seems to happen to all the neighbor women who get exposed to these sprays. I had never been sick like this before. It took me many months to recover my health. Fortunately, being an herbalist and yoga practitioner, I was able to regain my health. One of my elderly neighbors was exposed to the same spray and was even sicker than I was, being an old person.

Testimony of Alena Crocker

In the Spring of 2008, while a junior in High School, I got woke up around 6:30 am by a very loud noise. I went outside to see what was happening. It was a helicopter spraying poison on a clearcut on the mountain across the street from our house. Where it was spraying is very near my school bus stop so I told my mom. She came out and watched the spraying with me and we watched as a cloud of fog moved from the spray location to our property and clung to some of our trees in our yard. My mom didn't want me to go to the bus stop so she drove me to school. I was feeling somewhat ill on the way to school but I had an important test and did not want to miss it. But after I got to school I got sicker and sicker and was taken to the doctor at noon. I had trouble breathing and pain in throat and had excruciating pain in my spine and muscles. The doctor wrote in his report that I had a pesticide exposure. That day my dad called PARC and asked them to come test our property for pesticide. They refused. They also would not come see me and test me. A year later my Dad was curious and asked PARC to send him a copy of the incident report they had written about my exposure. Their report said "Unlikely Exposure" even though my doctor's report said I had been exposed and even though they never saw me and never came to our property. When my dad asked how they could write in their report that my exposure was "unlikely" even though they never saw me and my doctor said I had been exposed, they replied that "they just don't believe that herbicides can drift a quarter mile." My dad got suspicious of PARC and investigated them. He found out that they are part of the Pesticide Division of the Oregon Department of Agriculture and are controlled by the pesticide industry. My dad also found out that the pesticide investigator for PARC who spoke with my dad, Mike Odenthal, is the ex head of a pesticide company. My pesticide exposure was from the same clearcut as when my parents got exposed, but a different year: they got exposed in 2007, me in 2008. When I got exposed so did my younger sister but she didn't go to the doctor because she didn't get as sick at school. Her main symptom was feeling sick to stomach, headache and numbness and tingling in arms. Both her and me had our menstrual cycles thrown out of our normal, which also happened to our mom and neighbor ladies.

Testimony of Eron King

In the Fall of 2009 Weyerhaeuser sprayed a clearcut around a quarter mile to half mile from my home. I was made sick and called PARC to complain. They never came out to my house. The surprising thing was that the spray was done on an extremely wet, foggy morning. The fog was so thick you couldn't see more than a short distance and the fog was moving rapidly. Also the spray was at a higher elevation than my home

NOTE: All the above persons and other residents with similar stories are available to be interviewed by the EPA in regard to this petition. Each of these persons were exposed to spray that was done a quarter to a half mile from their homes, thus we are calling for – in Proposed Action Two of this petition – a prudent one mile aerial spray buffer zone in our high risk Highway 36 Corridor and in other similar bioregions, pending the results of the study called for in proposed Action One.

Appendix Three to Petition

Note: This article relates to our Proposed Action Three

Register-Guard Newspaper Guest Viewpoint

by Day Owen

Foxes Guard Pesticides Henhouse

Three years ago the Pitchfork Rebellion, a forest dwellers support group movement concerned about pesticide use in forests near our homes, announced "The Pitchfork Inquiry Into the Influence of Big Business on State and Federal Government Agencies." We launched that investigation because we thought it bizarre that we could not get a single government agency to come out and interview people in our community who allege that they have been sickened by herbicide sprays.

Two years ago in this newspaper, we announced some of our preliminary findings, including the fact that the head of the Environmental Protection Agency for the Pacific Northwest, Elin Miller, was a former CEO of a multinational pesticide firm.

In brief, our inquiry found that things are much worse than we had suspected. For example, the agency that Oregonians are instructed to contact "to report pesticide impacts to health and/or the environment" is the Pesticide Analytical Response Center (PARC). It is part of the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Pesticide Division, which has a clause in its mission statement that reads: "To protect people while maintaining the availability of pesticides."

Our ongoing effort to establish a buffer zone limiting how close a helicopter can spray pesticide next to a home must make it through the House Agriculture Committee. That panel is under the thumb of the state's most powerful lobbying group: Oregonians for Food and Shelter. Our report found that its members include many of the largest multinational corporations in America, including pesticide makers Monsanto and Dow Chemical.

We investigated the College of Forestry at Oregon State University. The wing that studies pesticides related to forest practices is called the Vegetation Management Research Cooperative. We discovered that they have exactly three "supporting members": Dow Chemical, DuPont chemical and a German chemical company called BASF.

Throughout the three-year investigation, the one company that came up the most in regard to influencing state and federal government agencies was Monsanto, which

made the herbicide that sickened four members of my family, and many members of our community. While Monsanto's involvement was no surprise, researching the company led us to the biggest surprise of the inquiry: the federal Department of Homeland Security.

Because we were investigating primarily how the big pesticide companies influence government departments that oversee our environment, it would not have occurred to us to investigate the Department of Homeland Security. But when we discovered that a Monsanto man, George Poste, was appointed by President George W. Bush to head the agency's bioterrorism division, we did.

We discovered that, under the heading of "food security," U.S. tax dollars are now spent to do research on food bioengineering that directly benefits Monsanto. In fact, we found unbelievable financial shenanigans and additional links to Monsanto.

Another finding: Oregon permits up to three members of the Oregon Board of Forestry to have significant financial conflict of interest. That would be illegal if federal standards were adopted. When Pitchfork members go before that board to argue for an aerial spray buffer zone, we are facing such timber company executives as Larry Giustina and Jennifer Phillippi, who themselves profit from aerial sprays. At noon May 27, we will rally in front of the Veneta offices of the Forestry Department to call for an end to these conflicts.

Speaking of rallies, people ask if I really called for a "nonviolent revolution" at last year's rally at the federal courthouse in Eugene, as Homeland Security inspector Tom Keedy testified recently at Ian Van Ornum's "Taser trial."

You need to understand the context. As I approached the microphone, someone shouted, "What we need is a revolution!" I replied, "Yeah, we need a revolution, but it needs to be peaceful and nonviolent." I then described the Gandhian methodology used effectively by Martin Luther King Jr. and why it is superior to violence. I ended with a call to form autonomous chapters of 'R' Homeland Security, a Gandhian environmental movement that will focus on protecting the basic preconditions of life: Pure air, water and soil. The "R" stands for two things: "Our" and "Real."

Day Owen is co-founder of the Pitchfork Rebellion. For more information, go to pitchforkrebellion.com or write P.O. Box 160, Greenleaf, OR 97430

Appendix Four to Petition

Note: This newspaper article is included as it describes our recent rally as "the largest forest-related rally in Eugene since the 1990's." The need for pesticide reform and an aerial spray buffer zone has become a major issue in Oregon and must be dealt with a.s.a.p.

FOREST RALLY TARGETS PESTICIDE SPRAYING

Hundreds of Lane County residents, many with tanned and sunburned faces, streamed on foot from downtown and Saturday Market to the old Eugene Federal Building Saturday, Aug. 29, to join the Pitchfork Rebellion in music, mock trials, skits and testimony against herbicide and pesticide spraying organizations. A grim reaper effigy of the Monsanto Company with a dollar sign on its forehead and an evil toothy grin greeted those walking up the stairs.

Day Owen, co-founder of the Pitchfork Rebellion, presided over the mock trials as the "Jester of the Peace," complete with jester hat. Shouts in support of the activist group accompanied the skits and testimony against the Pesticide Division of the Oregon Department of Agriculture and the Oregon Department of Forestry for their use of helicopters to spray toxic chemicals near homes and water resources. Audience members booed the actor representing the Monsanto Company (bedecked in a suit and carrying a devil's mask on a pitchfork), a developer and retailer of pesticides and herbicides like Yieldgard and Roundup. Monsanto also sells crop seeds to farmers, seeds that Owen says are ruining farm diversity in the U.S.



Day Owen presides over the mock trials

This event was far different from the last Pitchfork Rebellion rally where Ian Van Ornum was Tasered in May of 2008. Police officers were mostly seen behind the glass doors of the courthouse, occasionally wandering by to check in on the event's progress. Owen and other speakers (including I-chèle of I-chèle and the Circle of Light, lead singer for the event's reggae band) repeatedly expressed their desire for a "nonviolent, peaceful revolution" which elicited hoots and hollers from the crowd. But later, taking off the jester hat and putting on a camouflage bandanna, Owen said, "We are willing to perform nonviolent civil disobedience and go to jail for it." That didn't prove necessary on Saturday.

Neila Crocker-Owen, Owen's wife, got behind the microphone and described her experience of being exposed to pesticides blowing near their home. She said that telling the story and reliving it was hard. But she added that she was happy with the turnout for the event and that she believes the changes Pitchfork Rebellion wants are the "wave of the future."

Day Owen estimates about 350 people came to the event over the course of the day, making it the largest attendance at a forest rally in Eugene since the mid-1990s. — Shaun O'Dell

END NOTE:

Request for a Visit to Our Region by

Lisa P. Jackson

It is our hope that Lisa P. Jackson, the next time she can be in the Pacific Northwest, will arrange to come visit the Highway 36 Corridor that is the topic of this petition. If she can not make the trip herself, perhaps one of her representatives can. We believe this is important because "seeing is believing". When you actually see with your own eyes how the clearcuts that get aerial sprayed are virtually directly above homes, it is easy to understand how the drift would easily move farther distances than would be the case on level ground such as farm lands.

You may schedule such a visit, or ask questions or request additional materials, by calling David 'Day' Owen at: (541) 927-3017 or email him at: greenlion@pitchforkrebellion.com

Summary of petition to Lisa Jackson from Day Owen

Note: there are three "Proposed Actions" followed by numbered "Facts"

<u>Proposed Action 1:</u> requests EPA to conduct a study of appropriate aerial spray buffer zones for Highway 36 corridor in Lane County.

- 1: there are no aerial spray buffer zones in Oregon
- 2: members of group have been harmed by exposure to pesticide drift
- 3: EPA data on spray drift is largely based on data provided by pesticide industry
- 4: drift data is too generic
- 5: Highway 36 corridor has unique conditions related to drift (fog, wind)
- 6: there have been no studies of these unique "bioregion" conditions
- 7: EPA needs to conduct a study without industry involvement

<u>Proposed Action 2:</u> requests EPA to create a risk model and mandate an aerial spray buffer zone of one mile around sensitive sites

- 1: they will provide evidence that the region deserves immediate attention and protection, including testimony of poisoned individuals and from government agency meetings that the area is a "hot-spot" of complaints
- 2: buffer zones should be set according to local conditions, and their region warrants a more extreme zone than most other areas
- 3: a one-mile buffer zone is prudent based on testimonials

<u>Proposed Action 3:</u> requests an investigation of how industry influence has impacted laws, policies, and current spray practices along Highway 36 corridor

- 1: based on government interactions over 7 years, convinced that big business has undue influence over every state and federal agency, and
- have asked agencies, including EPA, to interview people poisoned
- tried for several years to meet or talk with Elin Miller, but only spoke to public relations officers
- 2: requests the investigation be conducted by a team appointed by Lisa Jackson
- 3: reasserts that influence of EPA by big business has led to current spray practices. Request the investigation cover the years from EPA inception to Obama inauguration.
- 4: more on undue influence

End Note: requests a visit with Lisa Jackson or representative